





## **ARTICLE I**

### **Name**

The name of this church shall be Corinth United Church of Christ of Hickory, North Carolina.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Purpose**

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward mankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Polity**

This church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ relating to local churches.

The government of this church is vested in its members who exercise the right of control of all of its affairs through its Pastor and its duly elected representatives who together constitute the executive body of this church which shall be designated as the Consistory.

## ARTICLE IV

### Faith and Covenant

Faith — This church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of man. It acknowledges as brothers in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two Sacraments: Baptism, and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

Covenant — We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice and peace. As did our fathers, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

## ARTICLE V

### Membership

Membership in this church shall be open to any person who has been baptized, has been confirmed, or has made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In accordance with the gospel covenant which binds into a unity faithful people of all ages, tongues and races, membership is open to all without regard to race or color.

Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to live the Christian life; to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its support and benevolences; and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.

Any member may, on his own request, be granted a letter of transfer by the Spiritual Council. If wishing to join a body not in fellowship with this church, he may be dismissed with a certificate of church membership.

If, because of change of faith or for other reasons not involving unchristian conduct, a member requests in writing to be released from his membership obligations, the church shall patiently endeavor to secure his continuance in its fellowship; but failing in such effort, the church may grant the request and terminate his membership.

A member whose address has long been unknown or who for a period of two years, in spite of spiritual care, has not attended the church's worship, or contributed to its support, may, by recommendation of the Spiritual Council and vote of the Consistory, be removed from the membership roll.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Governing Body**

The governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in church meeting. The vote of a majority of members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church. A quorum shall consist of ten (10%) per cent of the members.

## ARTICLE VII

### Consistory

The Consistory shall be executive body of this church. It shall be composed of its duly elected members, and the Pastor or Pastors of this church who shall be full members with voice and vote. One-half of its members shall constitute a quorum.

The Consistory shall consist of twenty-four (24) regular members who shall be elected by a majority vote cast at a church meeting. The initial Consistory shall consist of eight (8) members elected for a one year term, eight (8) members elected for a two year term, and eight (8) members elected for a three year term. Thereafter the term of each member elected to the Consistory shall be for a period of three years. No person shall be eligible to be elected a member of the Consistory who at the time of an election is then serving, but a former member shall be eligible if he has not served during the preceding year.

The Consistory shall organize itself each year, electing from among its lay members a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary. The Consistory shall appoint a Treasurer of the church who need not be a member of the Consistory. The President, and in his absence the Vice President, shall preside over all meetings of the Consistory and congregation. The Consistory shall form such boards and committees as will serve to further the purpose of the Church.

The duly elected officers of the Consistory shall serve as the Trustees of the church for the purpose of holding title to property on behalf of the church, for the execution of conveyances of property, and for such other purposes as Trustees may legally serve.

Nominations shall be made for Consistory members by a committee composed of the retiring members of the Consistory. Other nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting at which the election is held. Nominations for initial membership of the Consistory shall be made by a nominating committee composed of five members of the present Consistory, and further nominations may be made from the floor. The nominating committee shall seek the advice and counsel of the membership of the church in the selection of the nominees.

When elected, the members of the Consistory shall be publicly ordained to or installed in their respective offices.

Vacancies on the Consistory may be filled by the Consistory for the unexpired terms.

The Consistory shall be the policy-making body and shall transact the business of the church, be responsible for the use and care of the church property, make provision for the determining and raising of the current expense budget as well as for our Christian World Mission and benevolences, and provide for the auditing of financial accounts and for the adequate support of the staff. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all church records, and report to the church at its regular and special meetings. All acts and deliberations of the Consistory are subject to the will of and revision of the governing body.

The Consistory shall instruct the proper officers on all fiscal matters, with monthly review by the Consistory.

Except when otherwise determined by vote of its members, the Consistory shall meet at least once every month for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the President's call.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Spiritual Council**

The Spiritual Council shall assist and support the Pastor in the total ministry of the Church. It shall be composed of the Pastor or Pastors and five members of the Consistory appointed by it. The Pastor shall serve as Chairman. It shall provide the elements for the Lord's Supper and, when invited by the Pastor, shall aid in their distribution. It shall have jurisdiction in matters of discipline except in the case of the Pastor. It shall admit members to full communion in the congregation and grant letters of transfer. Spiritual Council members shall take heed to the high calling of their office, guarding faithfully all the spiritual interests of the church, maintaining order in the house of God, visiting the sick, and ministering to the edification and comfort of all.



## ARTICLE IX

### Pastor

The congregation shall call as its pastor an ordained minister qualified by education and experience and with standing or eligibility for standing in the United Church of Christ. A majority vote of the congregation in favor of the nominee shall constitute a call.

The Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relationship, three months' notice shall be given by either party. The procedure shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

When either party decides to terminate the relationship, the termination shall be by action of the Consistory, and notice of such termination with reasons for it shall be sent to the congregation, the Conference Executive and to the Association for appropriate action.

It shall be the responsibility of the Pulpit Committee, appointed by the Consistory to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of Pastor.

In filling a vacancy or in securing supply ministers for the period of vacancy, the Pulpit Committee may seek the counsel of the Conference Placement Committee.

The Pulpit Committee may request the Conference Executive to secure relevant information about any minister whom it wishes to consider for the vacancy.

The Pulpit Committee shall present to the Consistory the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy, and the Consistory shall make its recommendations to the congregation.

In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement of the church to participate in the Pension Fund of the United Church of Christ, the Ministers' Health Insurance Program, and other terms agreed between the candidate and the Committee. The minister, the church, the Association, and the Conference Executive shall each receive a copy of the call.

When a minister accepts a call to this church, the church and he shall join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation in accordance with regulations and procedures established under the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and the procedures of the Council for Church and Ministry of the United Church of Christ. A report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Association and by the Conference Executive, and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ and to the Council for Church and Ministry.

Brotherly discipline of the Pastor shall be in conformity with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

The church in consultation with the Pastor may at its discretion choose an Associate or Assistant Pastor, and may employ such assistants and staff members as in its discretion shall be deemed to be advisable.

## ARTICLE X

### Property

The Trustees in the church's name may sue or be sued, may under direction of the Consistory acquire real and personal property by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise, and may own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as the church may undertake, and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purposes of the church; they may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the church.

Upon dissolution of the church, after paying or adequately providing for its debts or obligations, the Trustees, or persons in charge of liquidation, shall grant, convey, assign and transfer the remaining assets of this church unto:

(1) A state, a territory, a possession of the United States or any political subdivision of any of the foregoing; or to the United States or the District of Columbia, to be used exclusively for public purposes.

(2) A corporation, trust, or community chest, fund or foundation:

- (a) Created or organized in the United States or in any possession thereof, or under the laws of the United States, any state, or territory, the District of Columbia, or any possession of the United States;
- (b) Organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals;
- (c) No part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; and

- (d) No substantial part of the activities of which is carrying on propoganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation.

The assets transferred to any organization listed above shall be used within the United States, or any of its possessions, exclusively for the purpose specified in subparagraph (b) of paragraph (2) or paragraph (3).

- (3) Any person, firm or corporation qualifying as a proper recipient under the then existing Internal Revenue Code.

No such organization listed above shall qualify for distribution unless such organization shall be an organization, association, fund, or foundation organized and operated exclusively for charitable, religious, scientific, educational, or other purposes which is then a tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation under the United States Internal Revenue Code, and which is then recognized as such by the United States Bureau of Internal Revenue.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Retirement**

The Pastor and all other staff members shall retire upon attaining the age of 65—years. Provided, however, when in the opinion of the Consistory there are special circumstances requiring the continued services of a pastor or other staff member who has attained the age of 65 years, such person, at the request of the Consistory, may continue to serve on a year to year basis. The provisions of this article shall go into effect two years after the date of the ratification or adoption of this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Church Meetings**

The Annual Meeting of the church shall be held on the fourth Monday in the month of January, and such special meetings as may be called by the Consistory upon notice duly given shall be held at such times as specified in the notice. At the annual meeting, the Consistory, the officers of the church, the Pastor, and all church organizations shall submit their annual reports in writing.

Special church meetings may be called by the Consistory and shall be called upon request by petition to the Consistory signed by not less than five (5%) per cent of the members. The Consistory shall call such meetings within three weeks from receipt of the petition, and adequate notice of such meeting shall be sent to the membership by the Secretary.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **Rules of Order**

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by this Constitution unless otherwise ordered by the Consistory.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **Amendments**

Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any duly called church meeting by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present, public announcement of the text of the proposed amendment having been made two weeks prior to the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XV**

This Constitution shall become effective upon approval by the presently existing Consistory of this church and upon approval of the same by a majority vote of the members of this church present at an annual meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose of the consideration of the adoption of this Constitution. The present Consistory of the church and all officers thereof shall continue to serve until membership of the new Consistory and its officers have been duly elected and installed.



